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Deletions in CIA Report Bared

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See Attempt to Lessen Study Value

BY WILLARD EDWARDS
(Chicago Tribune Press Service)

Washington, Aug. 31 — The state department, in releasing a secret central intelligence agency study for publication Aug. 23, made a significant deletion in a covering memorandum, it was learned today.

The apparent purpose of the omission was to downgrade the importance of the document as a government paper representing official opinion.

Only a few changes were made in the body of the report. With one or two exceptions, they were not of major import.

Acts to Avoid Scoop

These alterations were noted in a comparison of the original CIA survey of "Trends in the World Situation," dated Feb. 19, 1964, and the second, updated to June 8, which was released to a selected group of reporters on Friday, Aug. 21.

The state department said it was taking this unusual action, removing the "secret" label from a paper prepared by the CIA, the nation's espionage branch, because it had learned that its contents were to be published the following Sunday by THE CHICAGO TRIBUNE.

Administration officials emphasized that the secret paper did not reflect official foreign policy. It was described as "a thought-provoking" composition by one individual, Willard Matthias, and a "think piece" typical of many distributed thru government agencies.

Key Phrase Deleted

This statement did not accord with a covering memorandum attached to the original document, signed by Sherman Kent, chairman of the CIA's board of national estimates. Kent noted that the paper had received general board approval and has been twice revised and supplemented after board discussion.

This latter phrase, disclosing that the study was more than the opinion of one official and had received board approval after careful scrutiny and debate on two occasions, resulting in revision and additions, was deleted from the Kent memorandum when the entire document was released to the press.

In updating the released paper by six months, the government made few changes in its

wording. Some merely adjusted the time element, changing such phrases as "in recent months" to "within the last year."

Keep Viet Evaluation

There was no change in the despairing estimate of the problem in South Viet Nam, with its conclusion that "no end is in sight," that a "prolonged stalemate" was the most to be anticipated, and suggesting that there was a chance for "some kind of negotiated settlement based upon neutralization."

Nor was there any alteration in the top-level intelligence report which suggested that Russia in the future will diminish the "vigor of its revolutionary effort outside the communist world."

One paragraph deleted from the original paper read as follows:

"Pope Paul's visit to the Holy Land and the reception accorded him by the leaders and peoples of the eastern churches, has further spurred the ecumenical movement and contributed to the growing feeling that progress without radical change is possible not only within Europe but within all Christendom."

Foreign Influence Deleted

No reason was advanced for elimination of this statement.

In another section, discussing "a high degree of political instability" in Latin America,

the paper had referred to "revolutionary plotting, some of it stimulated from abroad." The phrase, "some of it stimulated from abroad," was deleted. Presumably, it did not accord with the "Russia is mellowing" theme which permeated the document.

A reference to the "Arab-Israeli dispute" as one of the causes of world tension also was deleted.